



## From the Associate Editor



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**Associate Editor, Hawaii Medical Journal**

## To HMJ Peer Reviewers — MAHALO!

The *Journal's* 200-plus peer reviewers are the backbone of the editorial process from submission of manuscripts by authors to disposition, ultimately publication or rejection. The Editor, Associate Editor and the Editorial Board mediate this process.

Our Peer Reviewers represent a broad slice of the biomedical community, and provide expertise in almost every area of health care. They are selected from referrals by officers of the Hawaii Medical Association, presidents of County Medical Societies, and the current panel of peer reviewers. Some are physicians, others are allied professionals; some are HMA members, others are not.

Reviewers evaluate manuscripts for scientific merit, appropriateness, methodology, originality, relevance of figures and tables, and clarity of style using our *Guidelines for Reviewers* for specific instructions. Their *pro bono* deliberations provide outstanding community service in educating authors (and not infrequently the editors!), promoting collegial professional interactions, and maintaining quality of publications at a high level. They winnowed 26 manuscripts for inclusion in the *Journal* in 2002, from among numerous submissions. Our current cadre of peer reviewers is significantly larger than the 157 we counted in 1996, extending the spectrum of consultant expertise.

The AMA sponsors periodic congresses on peer review in biomedical publications, most recently in 1994, 1997 and 2001, and also publishes occasional peer review theme issues. The most recent of these were June 5, 2002 and July 15, 1998. "Peer Review: Crude and Understudied, but Indispensable"<sup>1</sup> summarizes a leitmotif permeating all presentations by recognizing that, although not perfect, "peer review at it's best can screen out investigations that are poorly conceived, poorly designed, poorly executed, trivial, marginal, or uninterpretable; it improves the quality of individual manuscripts, steers research results to appropriate journals, and helps people who are not experts to decide what to believe".

Our 256 peer reviewers have enabled us to come very close to achieving these objectives, thereby presenting you, our readers, with well-designed studies of significance and interest. It's my real pleasure as the *Journal's* new Associate Editor to join the Editor in thanking each and every one of our reviewers for a job well done.

### Reference

1. Kassirer JP, Campion EW. Peer review: Crude and understudied, but indispensable. *JAMA*. 1994; 272:96-97.



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